

REMARKS

The invention relates to a camera that uses flash illumination to assist the photographer in composing a photograph.

In the claims:

Claims 1-3, 5-13, and 15-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al. (U.S. Pat. Application No. 2001/0043277) in view of Matsui (U.S. Pat. Application No. 2002/0048457). Claims 1, 4, 11, 14, and 19 have been amended to further distinguish over the prior art. Applicant believes the rejection to be overcome.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the camera strobe flashes repeatedly throughout an interval during which composition of a photograph occurs. Similar amendments are made to claims 4, 11, 14, and 19. The amendments find support in the specification at least at page 6 line 17 through page 9 line 2, and in Figures 2 and 3. None of the cited art teaches or suggests flashing a camera strobe repeatedly throughout an interval during which composition of a photograph occurs. Tanaka describes only one "pre-light emission image" taken between the "S1" and "S2" positions. (Tanaka paragraphs [0172] - [0176] and Figure 12.) Matsui teaches multiple flashes as pre-flash (Matsui paragraph [0064]), but does not suggest that the flashes continue throughout an interval during which composition of a photograph occurs.

Furthermore, Matsui's pre-flash is used to "measure the subject brightness". (Matsui paragraph [0065].) Applicant's disclosure contemplates pre-flash "for estimating the proper strobe energy for good exposure of [a] final photograph" (page 2 lines 10-11), but notes that this use of the strobe occurs "after composition is complete". (page 2 line 12.) Clearly, the flashes of Matsui do not occur during an interval during which composition of a photograph occurs.

Because the cited references, even when combined, do not teach or suggest all of the elements of Applicant's independent claims 1, 11, and 19, these claims are believed allowable.

Claims 2, 3, and 5-10 depend from claim 1 and add further limitations, and are thus also believed allowable.

In particular regard to claims 8-10, the examiner relies on Tanaka for showing a camera wherein the camera flashes the strobe once for each preview image. Applicant has previously explained that Applicant's preview image is analogous to Tanaka's "live view", and not to Tanaka's "preview display" of a "pre-light emission image". (See Applicant's office action response filed 5/19/05, page 8.) As is plain in Tanaka's Figure 12, five "live view" images are taken in the interval between S1 and S2, while only one "pre-light emission" (flash) occurs. Clearly Tanaka does not flash its strobe once for each preview image.

Claims 12, 13, 15-18, and 20-22 depend from claim 11 and add further limitations, and are thus also believed allowable.

Claims 4 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al. (U.S. Pat. Application No. 2001/0043277) in view of Matsui (U.S. Pat. Application No. 2002/0048457) and Iwai (U.S. Pat. No. 5,198,855). These claims depend from allowable claims 1 and 11 respectively, and add further limitations, and are thus also believed allowable.

Claims 23 and 24 have been newly added. These claims find support at least at page 4 line 22 through page 5 line 19, page 6 line 17 through page 9 line 2, and in Figures 2 and 3. None of the cited art, even when taken in combination, teaches or suggests all of the elements of these added claims, and claims 23 and 24 are believed allowable.

Applicant believes this application is in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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